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Framing Employment Relations in Western Europe

Bruno Wueest

Flavia Fossati

Department for Political Science (University of Zurich)



**Universität
Zürich** UZH

ETH

Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich

FRAMING EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS IN WESTERN EUROPE

Bruno Wueest

wueest@ipz.uzh.ch

Policy Analysis

Department for Political Science, University of Zurich

Flavia Fossati

fossati@pw.uzh.ch

Swiss Politics and Comparative Political Economy

Department for Political Science, University of Zurich

Abstract

During the past few decades, frame analysis has become a popular concept in political communication studies as a tool for understanding underlying beliefs and motives in public conflicts. The study of conflicts focusing on labor market reforms has even longer been of pivotal concern for several other social science sub-disciplines such as research on the welfare state. We try to combine these research traditions with a newspaper content analysis conducted in the U.K., France, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Austria. The framing of employment relations varies across countries as could be expected on the basis of their historical legacies of politico-economic coordination, but only if we take the presence and degree of pressure for liberalizing reforms into account. Furthermore, the results show that, on both the political left and right, mainstream actors must be distinguished from challengers to explain actor-specific differences.

Keywords: Framing, Employment Relations, Labor Market Reforms, Compensation Hypothesis, Content Analysis, Western Europe

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INTRODUCTION

Policymaking is a process of social learning, in which conflicts on ideas and values play a crucial role. In today's established democracies, these ideational and value-based conflicts are increasingly carried out in mass-mediated public debates, making these debates a central forum for social learning (Sniderman, 2000, p. 75). In this paper, we explore the role of ideas in the public debate on employment relations by means of a frame analysis of newspaper articles in six Western European countries (the U.K., France, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Austria). Frames have become a crucial tool for understanding the underlying mechanisms that shape ideas in public debates and thus politics in general (Scheff, 2005). Accordingly, we have strong evidence of the importance of frames in opinion formation processes in policy domains as diverse as immigration, abortion, welfare, or Europeanization (Ferree et al., 2002; Medrano, 2003; Helbling et al. 2010, Chong and Druckmann 2007).

Since little is known about the framing of employment relations, we will consider in the following the questions of how and why actors and countries differ in their framing of conflicts over labor market issues. Ultimately, this reveals how ideologies are integrated into everyday political conflicts on labor market policies and the surrounding institutional agreements (Kriesi et al. 2012). This analysis explores the impact of path dependency, reform pressure and actor preferences on the use of specific frames to justify positions on labor market issues. On the one hand, we start from an institutionalist's perspective and ask whether and how national peculiarities shape the competition for the dominant framing of employment relations. In establishing the links between institutions and the arguments used, the analysis thus reveals how in different countries the debate climate systematically differs according to the historical development of the labor market regimes. In addition, we will show that this path dependency interacts with the pressure for reform in the employment regime, i.e., whether the countries' governments recently managed to implement labor market reforms targeted to enhance com-

petitiveness. On the other hand, this analysis scrutinizes which actors mobilize which particular frame and how frames relate to the actors' policy positions. Instead of simply pitting policy positions of actors against each other, we may better understand why and how employment relation reforms are criticized by analyzing the political actors' reasoning about them.

These questions will be addressed by focusing on the public arena as it is reflected by the sum of public communications related to employment relations (see Helbling et al., 2011). We use the terms *labor market issues* and *employment relations* synonymously and define them in a fairly broad way as "all the behaviours, outcomes, practices, and institutions that emanate from or impinge on the [employment] relationship" (Kaufman, 2004, p. 45). More precisely, we assume that employment relations comprise the specific labor market policies such as wage agreements as well as the institutional settings where these policies are negotiated, decided, and implemented such as collective bargaining sites. Accordingly, the public debate on employment relations involves the communication process of a multitude of actors with vested interests.

Our country sample pits the three biggest European economies, France, Germany and the U.K., against the three small Western European countries of Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Austria. The three big economies have a pivotal role in the European economy which becomes manifest in the fact that, taken together, they are responsible for half of the European Union's gross domestic product (IMF, 2010). Beyond their pure economic strength, these countries differ considerably with respect to their historical pathways of economic development. The three small economies, on the other hand, represent the group of coordinated, adaptive, and successful Western European economies with a small workforce and high export market dependency.

Frames are “central organizing ideas that provide coherence to a designated set of idea elements” (Ferree et al., 2002, p. 105). In a more instrumental perspective, frames serve as cognitive cues indicating agreement on basic principles and linking specific policy positions to collective beliefs and values (Surel, 2000; Helbling et al. 2011). Thus, by using a frame, a political actor clarifies how he defines a problem and discloses what its causal interpretation should be (Entman, 1993, p. 52). Ultimately, actors strive to promote the frames that will be of greatest use in mobilizing support for their positions. This competition for the prevailing frame among political actors is conceptualized in manifold ways in the literature: as framing, priming, second-order agenda setting, or second-level agenda setting (Weaver 2007; Kiouisis et al., 2006; Iyengar and Kinder, 1987, p. 63). Yet, all of these concepts share the central notion that the perceived importance of specific interpretations is crucial to the outcome of opinion formation processes (Chong and Druckman, 2007, p. 115). Thus, we will examine the frames actors employ to manipulate the importance of specific aspects of labor market issues.¹ Moreover, the actors’ framing has to be consistent with their core ideologies, since they need to establish sustainable credibility in the public debate.

As Entman (2004, p. 14) specifies, the most successful frames are those “fully congruent with schemas habitually used by most members of society”. With respect to employment relations in Western Europe, this resonance with central societal themes is most likely achieved by the use of the ideological paradigms that have shaped the political economy since the beginnings of the modern European state (Gartzke, 2007; Surel, 2000, p. 169f.). Table 1 presents the paradigms as derived from the three historically dominant schools of thought: liberalism, neomercantilism and social democracy. While social democratic and liberal frames have been identified by previous accounts of framing processes related to economic issues

¹ Since the focus lies solely on framing by the political elite, framing effects (i.e., how framing influences individuals’ attitudes; see Brewer & Gross 2005) and journalistic framing (i.e., how messages are selected and reinterpreted by the media; see Matthes 2007) are not considered in this contribution.

(see Chong and Druckmann, 2007), this analysis adds neomercantilist arguments to the devices available for justifying positions on labor market policies. As will be discussed below, historically, neomercantilist ideas were developed independently from social democratic and liberal ideas and cater to the interests of public administrations and domestically oriented businesses.

[table 1 about here]

Systematic accounts of political economic thought started to emerge in seventeenth and eighteenth century Britain (Skousen, 2001), since “the growth of a market society in the early nineteenth century was driven by the ideology of liberalism that found expression in [...] market discourse as the ‘common sense’ of the emerging capitalist system” (Tarrow and Caporaso, 2009, p. 595f.). The regulatory program of economic liberalism allowed the European economies to be released from the formerly prevailing mercantilist structures. Later on, in the aftermath of the disastrous Great Depression, the liberal pro market core beliefs succumbed to the Social Democratic compromise.

Sketched in broad strokes, the *liberal* paradigm stands out by two central ideas which are listed as “economic freedom” and “prosperity” in table 1. On the one hand, its inherent notion of economic liberty justifies the emphasis on both property rights and individual freedom as a basic human need (Kitschelt, 1994). On the other hand, classical economic liberalism stands out for its emphasis on prosperity: if individuals strive for success, the whole society profits through the efficient allocation of resources by market mechanisms.

Liberalism was progressive with respect to its questioning of the *mercantilist* paradigm of pre-industrial Europe (Magnusson, 2003). Mercantilist doctrines were rooted in the idea that trade among nations is a zero-sum game and that states had to protect their own economy at the expense of others. In the nineteenth century, mercantilist theories were modified to become more comprehensive approaches that also considered the role of the state in the econo-

my. Reinvented as neomercantilism, it became the theory of *state dirigisme* by which territorial entities achieve economic wealth and political power (Immerwahr, 2009). Today, the continued vitality of these ideas is apparent in demands for the establishment of state-industrial complexes in strategic markets. These ideas are subsumed under the label “intervention” in table 1. Furthermore, neomercantilist thinking is also influential for nationalistic or regionalist approaches in international politics, evident in cases such as the justification of a common trade policy for the European Union (Hurrell, 1995; van Apeldoorn, 2002). This emphasis of a regional or national interest is described by the second neomercantilist category (“protection”) in table 1.

While classical liberalism tried to overcome mercantilist ideas, it itself was challenged by several influential leftist movements, ranging from revolutionary anarchists to moderate socialists (King 2003). In Western Europe, this thinking became an integral part of the political system, especially in the postwar compromise between labor and capital (Tarrow and Caporaso, 2009, p. 598). Accordingly, the main focus of *social democratic* ideas in Western Europe lies on the correction of the main flaws of capitalism: social protection from the most acute hardships, and the respect of basic human rights beyond economic imperatives (“fairness” and “social justice” in table 1).

In the light of these developments of economic thinking, we expect the frames that promote the social democratic and protectionist dimension as a response to longstanding demands for *compensation*, either in a welfare or identitarian sense. Historically, far-reaching economic liberalization only was sustainable if coupled with growing welfare states and selective protection that cushioned the victims of increased competitiveness and freer markets (Cameron 1978, Katzenstein 1985, Rodrik 1998). Furthermore, we expect the dimension subsuming liberal and interventionist frames to appear in the debate since it reflects the economic orthodoxy that dominates discourse in contemporary Western Europe. This framing dimen-

sion will be labeled as the *growth* dimension in the following.

HOW TO EXPLAIN THE USE OF FRAMES

To explain the use of the compensation and growth dimensions of framing, we propose theoretical arguments at two different levels. As shown in figure 1, we will outline that the framing of employment relations, in a first step depends on the specific national contexts. To this aim, we consider hypotheses derived from a model of *national divergence* of the debates on employment relations, which explains national framing differences that correspond with distinct historical pathways of coordination and regulation at the country level. Along with the Varieties of Capitalism (VoC) and welfare state regime literature, we therefore suppose that framing depends on the national ideological imprint (Esping-Andersen 1998; Huber et al. 1993; Huber and Stephens 2001). These hypotheses are complemented by expectations that the immediate temporal context of debates is influential as well. More precisely, we assume that the debate shifts to the growth dimension if a country suffers from too many delayed labor market reforms.

[figure 1 about here]

In a second step, we also take an *actor-specific* perspective and argue that differences in frame use can be explained by actor characteristics. Since the public is exposed to and chooses among competing frames, actors seek to influence which key organizing ideas are used for the evaluation of specific issues (Chong and Druckman, 2007; Kriesi et al., 2009). To explain the actors' framing, we start from the assumption that they employ frames in accordance with the underlying structural potentials of the debate, i.e., actors choose frames suitable for representing the specific interests they need to promote. An obvious example is political parties, which must seek to mobilize their constituencies. To this aim, we will distinguish between left-right ideological positions and the divide between the winners and losers of post-industrialization and globalization, i.e. actors belonging to the mainstream political forces and

those representing the losers. Following Rueda's (2006) argument, we can expect those political actors that are in a mainstream position to concentrate foremost on the winners, whereas the losers' interests are more difficult to mobilize due to their heterogeneity (Bonoli 2005). The losers' interests are therefore only addressed by less institutionalized political stakeholders.

We will test these expected differences against the often observed evidence of a policy change dominated by economically liberal ideas in Western European politics on employment relations and, consequentially, a general convergence of labor market regimes (Clayton and Pontusson, 1998; Streeck, 2006; Baccaro and Simoni, 2008). This means that we assume liberal frames to prevail in the debates but nevertheless expect framing patterns to systematically vary as a function of country or actor characteristics.

COORDINATION PATTERNS AND REFORM PRESSURE

Many influential theoretical frameworks in comparative political economy put the *divergent path* thesis forward, which states that differences in economic policy making among countries are persistent (Kitschelt, 1999, p. 444; Hays 2009, Hall and Soskice, 2001). Much of the early research on globalization contests such claims, arguing that market internationalization is forcing advanced economies to converge onto a single neoliberal model (e.g., Moses, 1994). A similar argument with respect to labor market policies was made by Jessop (1993) who argues that labor markets in Europe are continuously being reshaped towards a workfare model. According to him, inspired primarily by the U.S.A., countries are expected to converge as a consequence of the diffusion of the neoliberal policies which consider unemployment as primary a behavioral problem and which should therefore be corrected by negative incentives (sanctions) (compare Daguerre 2007; Jessop 1993). Also, more recent accounts of institutional change emphasize that there is a tendency to overstate the extent to which existing institutional differences reproduce themselves (e.g. Streeck and Thelen, 2005). The litera-

ture thus far from agrees on how resilient institutional configurations are, i.e. how strongly path dependency keeps economies on diverging paths. We argue that—at least with regard to the public debate and the rhetorical use of compensation and growth related arguments—there still are significant differences among the seemingly similar Western European countries.

Among the many conceptualizations of political-economic arrangements, an important attempt is the *Varieties of Capitalism* (VoC) approach, distinguishing, first, the Liberal market economies (LME) and second, the Coordinated market economies (CME) (Hall and Soskice 2001; Hancké, Rhodes, and Thatcher, 2007). Whereas in LME such as the U.K., the economic players are coordinated by means of competitive and hierarchical market arrangements, in CME the coordination of economic activities, for instance, industrial relations, security of employment, investor relations, or inter-firm negotiations is based on more horizontal and less market oriented mechanisms, as illustrated through the case of tripartite concertation. Table 2 shows the differences in coordination patterns between the countries included in our study, which are described by means of the level of Employment Protection Legislation (EPL)² and the Hall-Gingrich coordination index³. The EPL measures the extent to which a firms' ability to fire their workers is constrained by collective agreements or national legislation. This results in a divide in our sample of countries with those with more flexible labor markets (U.K. and Switzerland) on the one side and more regulated ones (especially France and Germany) on the other. Second, the degree of coordination in labor relations and corporate governance is captured by the Hall-Gingrich index, which allows for distinguishing between countries where labor relations and corporate governance are highly coordinated as is the case in Austria and Germany, and those where this is very liberal like the United Kingdom,

² For details about the construction of the indicator see OECD (2012), http://www.oecd.org/document/11/0,3746,en_2649_37457_42695243_1_1_1_37457,00.html

³ The Hall-Gingrich (2004) Cooperation Index results from a factor analysis of six indicators, i.e. “shareholder power”, “dispersion of control”, “size of stock market”, “level of wage coordination”, “degree of wage coordination” and “labour turnover” for the years between 1990-1995 and which is standardized to vary between 0 (low coordination) and 1 (high coordination).

and Switzerland and the Netherlands to a lesser extent.

[table 2 about here]

The strength of the VoC approach lies in the acknowledgment of the importance of business actors. However, as it becomes evident considering the case of France (see table 2), where the degree of coordination is comparable to that of Switzerland and the Netherlands, the traditional VoC approach fails to adequately acknowledge the role of the *state* in regulating and stabilizing the coordination mechanisms in labor market regimes. This central player is accordingly re-introduced by Schmidt (2009), whose theoretical framework shows that the nature of state interventions is able to capture and explain part of the divergence among CME countries. Schmidt adds the *State-Influenced Market Economies* (SME) to the VoC typology by separating, and hence the low coordination scores on the Hall-Gingrich index for France have to be considered with caution. In fact, in SMEs the governments and administrations play a dominant role and influence employment relations and the coordination efforts between the economy and social partners. The most clear-cut case of an SME country is France, which is characterized by a strong state in Badie and Birnbaum's (1983) understanding. In fact, it can be expected that the decision-making and implementation processes in France are characterized by a higher degree of centralization, and hence the state has the power to enforce policies unilaterally if necessary (Baccaro and Sang-Hoon 2007; Ferrera and Gualmini 2004; Molina and Rhodes 2007). Accordingly, in France, modernization strategies have traditionally relied on major industrial projects involving far-reaching state interventions (Thibergien 2007). On the contrary, in CMEs such as Germany or the Netherlands, these coordination activities are based on systems of agreements that are built around non-hierarchical negotiations. Due to the exceptional strength of the state in SMEs and the consequential focus on the strength of the national economy, we expect compensation related arguments to be especially prevalent in France because domestically oriented or strategically important industries have a

lot of leverage in the political process.

From the four remaining CMEs, the Netherlands and Switzerland can be further differentiated (Visser and Afonso: 2010). Similar to other continental European economies, the Netherlands and Switzerland face high wage floors and fixed labor costs, but as outliers they rely on a relatively flexible labor market to compensate for economic difficulties by extending part-time and temporary employment (Visser and Hemerjick 1997; Bonoli and Mach 2000). Moreover, in contrast to other CMEs, labor movements traditionally play a subordinate role and business interests are dominated by the large export-oriented companies. It is therefore expected that Switzerland and the Netherlands represent a liberal leaning variation of the general continental CME (Schnyder and Heemskerk, 2008).

Viewed in its entirety, we might see the following ranking for the emphasis of growth related arguments from the strongest to the weakest: U.K., Switzerland, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, and France. However, not only can we expect the institutional variables such as the degree of coordination or the strictness of employment protection legislation to influence the way in which labor market relations are framed in the public debate, but we can also suppose that country-specific *reform pressure* represents a pivotal additional variable which can alter the framing strategies. In countries where the Employment Protection Legislation (EPL) is rather inflexible and governments have not yet addressed the pressure for more competitiveness (Austria and France), the national debate can be expected to shift to a pro-market framing (growth). As illustrated by table 2, this mainly applies to Austria and France with EPL levels of 2.04 and 2.8 as well as only 5 and 7 liberalizing reforms.

ACTOR PREFERENCES

Besides the influence of the national context on the overall framing of labor market debates, we also expect the framing strategies to diverge between different stakeholders. However, before their framing strategies are explored, it has to be clarified which actor types in-

habit the debate on employment relations, since a simplification of the multitude of statements by conflating them to actor types heavily preconditions the interpretation of empirical findings. Table A.2 lists the actor types and how they will be used in the analyses.

The classification initially makes the very broad distinction between public authority actors, interest groups, parties, and corporations. The public authority actors include international governmental organizations like the World Trade Organization, European Union actors, as well as administrative bodies. Interest groups are divided into trade unions and employer associations. The latter category also comprises professional organizations, which had too few statements to be collapsed into an own category. With respect to the trade unions, private sector unions (including peak unions) are distinguished from public sector unions. In a similar vein, peak employer associations and white-collar organizations are separated from small business associations and farmers' organizations. Corporations, finally, are differentiated into public enterprises and multinational corporations.

Depending on the political constituency whose interests they traditionally represent, these actors can be expected to advance and use different frames. More specifically, we argue that the structure of political debates on employment relations entails two political divides shaping the patterns of justifications. Firstly, the traditional left-right divide can be expected to have retained important explanatory power. Even though many scholars argue that it has developed merely into a valence issue (Dalton et al. 1984, Kitschelt 1994, Hardin 2000), it is evident that the ideological antagonism between labor and capital still divides today's politics at least to some extent (Pontusson and Rueda 2010). Apart from the opposition between state and market, this divide concerns also the characteristics of de-commodification⁴ policies. It separates labor, i.e. unions, parties on the left and public interest groups (social movements

⁴ Esping-Anderson (1998) defines de-commodification as social policies, which were adopted by the welfare states to ensure workers' pay against traditional risks, i.e. sickness, injury and unemployment. Hence, de-commodifying policies were introduced to decrease the dependence of employees and their families from the (labor) market (Schwartz 2001).

and charity organizations) which favor highly redistributive policies, from capital, i.e. parties on the right, employer's organizations and international firms, which prefer means tested benefit structures (Esping-Andersen 1998 and 1996).

However, the ideological left-right conflict is not as encompassing as it once was. It is at least partly overlaid with the divide emerging from the more recent socio-economic transformations such as globalization⁵ and post-industrialization⁶ (Bonoli 2005 and 2006, Häusermann 2010, Kriesi et al. 2008; Esping-Anderson 2009). Hence, we can expect that economic preferences have become more complex within the left as well as the right block (Häusermann 2009; Fossati 2012). Following Kriesi et al. (2006 and 2008: 4-5), economic winners are best conceptualized as having sufficient exit options in terms of their employment situation. The pivotal determinant is the level of marketable skills, since a high educational attainment guarantees an individuals' successful economic mobility even in highly flexible and internationalized labor markets (Oesch 2006). These marketable skills, which are captured in the case of Schwander and Häusermann (2009) by occupational profiles, make it possible to capture stable political preferences. Occupational profiles can be seen as a composite concept of the individuals' employment status derived from the skill-level, the protection guaranteed by work contracts, and the work logic of jobs (see Oesch 2006).⁷

In brief, we share the perception that the interests of the economic winners (or insiders, see Rueda 2006) of the last few decades are increasingly opposed by the needs of the losers (or outsiders). The decisive political dilemma for the politics of employment relations therefore is a situation where the winners are calling for more deregulation in order to sustain their benefits, whereas the losers are increasingly demanding social and national protective policy

⁵ Understood as the increase in cultural diversity, political integration, and the cross-border flows of trade, services and capital (Held et al. 1999).

⁶ Defined as the upswing of the tertiary sector, the feminization of the workforce, and the mounting pressure on the welfare state in an era of "permanent austerity", i.e. demographic aging combined with slow economic growth (Pierson 1996 and 2001).

⁷ Oesch (2006) distinguishes between four different work logics: self-employed, technical, organizational or interpersonal service.

solutions. Furthermore, since the winners are closer to the median voter, it seems safe to assume that mainstream actors in general represent the winners. Of course, this also depends on the specific context of political conflict and thus may vary during specific periods such as electoral contests (see Schwander 2012). Yet, on the long run, these actors should favor further deregulation and employ a mainly liberal framing strategy. Challengers, in contrast, might resort to protectionist and social democratic frames to justify policy measures that shelter the losers (see Wueest 2012). In sum, the separation of a political left from a political right as well as mainstream actors from their challengers leads to distinct patterns in terms of the dichotomy between growth and compensation related framing strategies.

In general, we can assume that the political left emphasizes compensation more than the political right, since social democratic interests and values such as full employment and social justice clearly constitute its traditional core beliefs. In terms of our classification, we count ‘old’ left actors (Social democrats, communist and radical socialist parties, and unions) as well as ‘new’ left actors (Greens and public interest groups) as part of the political left. However, if actors from the political left adapt to the structural changes in a way that attracts the winners, they might tend to be more balanced in terms of their framing. Most notably, this should apply for Social democratic and green parties which regularly are able to take over governmental responsibility. At least in some countries like Germany, these mainstream left actors are thus expected to emphasize more growth-related frames than the other left-wing actors, since they have to appeal to the economic winners in order to win elections. Moreover, due to their close alliance with the new left-wing parties, we would also expect public interest groups to pursue a similar framing strategy. Such a framing strategy might be termed a flex-icurity approach, since (social democratic) compensation and (liberal) growth arguments should balance each other out. The left-oriented actors which are supposed as advocating for the losers, i.e., the trade unions and Communists/radical Socialists, are expected to highlight

compensation aspects.

On the political right, we expect a very similar trend. The mainstream representatives of economic winners which lean to the political right, including the peak employers' associations, liberal and Christian democratic/conservative parties, as well as multinational corporations, should prefer the growth-related dimension of framing, since they are in favor of enhancing competitiveness and oppose protectionism and potentially costly welfare state measures. There are several actors which are not easily to define in terms of political right and left. This applies to public administrations, experts, EU and IGO actors as well as public enterprises. Yet, in line with their constant push to deepen and the European Single Market and to implement deregulative reforms on all levels, we expect these actors to tend towards growth-related strategy (Lehmkuhl 2006: 149, Howarth, 2006; Thatcher, 2007).

Finally, we expect a protectionist framing strategy, which is characterized by a right-oriented ideological stance and a tendency to protect the domestic losers from the effects of more flexible employment relations. Small business associations and radical populist parties are anticipated to pursue this strategy. Eventually, we should find a similar framing as for the mainstream left, since these right challengers should also emphasize compensation, although for economic nationalist and not social democratic reasons.

In sum, the framing should be balanced between growth and compensation for the mainstream left actors and right challengers. For the mainstream right actors, it should clearly lean towards growth-related arguments, and left challengers are expected to disproportionately emphasize compensation frames.

DESIGNING THE STUDY

In order to create a comprehensive picture of the framing on employment relations, a comparative newspaper content analysis was conducted in Austria, France, Germany, the

Netherlands, Switzerland, and the U.K.⁸ The choice to rely on newspaper articles was guided by the rationale that other sources such as party manifestos, parliamentary debates or campaign material do not contain data on all politically relevant actors in the debate on employment relations. Actors such as corporations, experts or administrations have often been neglected in previous studies. The analyses rely on quality newspaper articles, detailing the frames applied in employment relations over the three years from 2004 to 2006. The newspapers include *Le Monde* (F), *The Times* (GB), the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (D), the *NRC Handelsblad* (NL), *Die Presse* (A) and the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (CH). Given the fact that, due to the heavy workload of content analyses, only one media title could be considered, quality newspapers were chosen for conceptual reasons since they are particularly suited to study of public debates. They remain the leading medium of political coverage, and both report the debates in the most detailed manner and influence the editorial decisions of a wide range of other news organizations (Vliegthart and Walgrave, 2008; Reinemann, 2003).

The single instances of framing were identified using the Core Sentence Approach (CSA). If a policy statement of a relevant actor is found in a text segment, this segment is reduced to its most basic structure (a *core sentence*) that contains only the subject (*actor*), the object (*issue*), the direction of the relationship between subject and object (*polarity*), and the justifications of the relationship (*frames*). The polarity is always quantified using a scale ranging from -1 to +1, where -1 means opposition and 1 means support of economic liberalization, with three intermediary positions indicating a vague or ambiguous relationship. By frames, the problem definition an actor gives when taking a policy position is meant. Since actors regularly back their policy positions in public debates with multiple frames (Lerch and Schwellnus, 2006, p. 307), the coding of up to five frames per core sentence was allowed. The example in Table 3 illustrates the coding procedure. This core sentence refers to Blair's support of

⁸ This content analysis data set was established by the authors and collaborators in the research project *National Political Change in a Globalizing World* (see Kriesi et al., 2012).

unspecific labor market reforms, which is complemented by a social protection frame (“in order to tackle record unemployment”) as well as a prosperity frame (“in order to tackle [...] sluggish growth”).

[table 3 about here]

To reduce time and costs, a two-step sampling strategy was performed. First, the relevant events in each country were identified using various yearbooks as well as the annual reviews of the newspapers in our sample. These lists formed the basis for an extensive keyword list for each country, helping us to electronically find potentially relevant articles in the newspaper databases. Second, a chronological sample of approximately the same number of articles per country was drawn. Chronological sampling tracks the frequency distribution of relevant articles and therefore captures the peaks and troughs in the debate. Subsequently, due to the time-consuming nature of the coding procedure, at most the first twenty core sentences of each article were coded. In sum, the data collection yielded a total of 2021 frames, which were aggregated to the six frame categories as illustrated by table A.1 in the appendix.

In a pretest, six coders obtained a coefficient of reliability of 0.77 for coder agreement on the identification of core sentences. Inter-coder agreement for the correct annotation of actors and frames was 0.88 and 0.74, respectively. Given that the typical level of acceptance is 0.80 (Lombard et al., 2002), the agreement was already close to an acceptable threshold before the actual data collection started. Subsequently, additional coder training and improved coding instructions were provided in order to address the remaining uncertainties. Moreover, comparisons of this CSA data with data from expert judgments, party manifesto coding, and mass surveys, suggest that the external validity is given as well (see Helbling and Tresch, 2011).

THE STRUCTURE OF FRAMING ON EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS

To provide a broad overview of the content analysis data, table 3 shows the frame em-

phasis and frame polarities with respect to the public debate on labor market issues. On the one hand, the table indicates the overall distribution of both the higher level and fine-grained frame categories in percentages (emphasis). This shows which frames are preferred to justify statements related to employment relations. On the other hand, the overall direction for the different frame categories is indicated (polarity). Frame polarities show whether a frame is predominantly used with supporting or opposing statements with regards to *labor market reforms*. A positive polarity always means support for more deregulation, i.e. policies that induce a liberalization of employment relation or a privatization of labor market institutions. Note that the frame emphasis and polarity are always calculated using probability weights on the level of articles, which account for imbalances caused by the selection of articles.

[table 4 about here]

As far as frame emphasis is concerned, liberal frames are clearly most often used as arguments to justify statements on labor market policies. With 46 percentage points they account for almost half of all frames. More precisely, prosperity-related frames are the most important category with a relative frequency of 36 percentage points. In contrast, social democratic frames amount to only about one third of all frames used. Nevertheless, social security related arguments are used comparatively often with 27.3 percentage points. The use of these rather pragmatic frames clearly outstrips the more universalistic arguments related to economic fairness. Neomercantilist justifications are somewhat less important, making up for 19.8 percent of all frames. Here, the frequency of arguments related to intervention and protection is roughly equal.

Turning to the polarity of the frames used in the debate on labor market issues, the total polarity indicates that the overall climate over all countries reflects support of deregulation (+0.11). While prosperity, protection, and, to a lesser degree, intervention are clearly used with statements in favor of more flexible labor markets (+0.35, +0.30, and +0.15, respective-

ly), justifications pointing to economic freedom have a positive polarity so close to zero that a the direction should not be interpreted in terms of clear position in favor or against labor market deregulation. A polarity of 0.04 means that positive and negative statements almost cancel each other out. The outcome of the debate is therefore merely ambivalent with respect to this frame category. Fairness and social security, by contrast, are heavily connected to the opposition of labor market deregulation (−0.23 and −0.18). Both social democratic frame categories thus countervail the distinctly positive polarities related to prosperity and protection frames.

HOW FRAME POLARITIES ALIGN

After establishing an overview of the distribution of frames, the analysis proceeds with the question of how the actors' frame polarities are structured into underlying dimensions of the frame competition on employment relations. To this aim, a factor analysis was applied to the frame polarities, which is shown in table 5.⁹ In this data, the eigenvalue test, as well as the parallel analysis shown in figure A.1 in the appendix both indicate a two-factor solution as an optimal representation of the structure of the frame polarities.

[table 5 about here]

The polarities of the two liberal frames load higher on the first factor (highlighted in bold), which therefore can be regarded as a conflict dimension that separates actors emphasizing economic *growth* as priority from those that promote fairer employment relations. Yet not only free market framing strategies (prosperity with 0.31 and economic freedom with 0.54), but also the framing related to state-led development strategies align on this dimension, since intervention has a higher factor loading here as well (0.76). This result was expected on the basis of the prevailing economic orthodoxy in Western Europe. Overall, deregulation is thus primarily justified as a growth strategy in the sense of economic promotion by the public au-

⁹ The factors could not be calculated over all 14 actor categories and six countries, since not all combinations are present in the data and actors with less than five statements were not considered. The final number of observations is therefore 61.

thorities. State intervention is thus only consistent with this framing strategy if the emphasis lies on enhancing business opportunities.

The second factor is built around the combination of social democratic frames and protectionist justifications. Fairness has a factor loading of 0.56, social security loads with 0.68, and slightly less clear, protection has a value of 0.24 on this dimension. Since the common denominator of these three categories is protection, in a social or territorial sense, the dimension corresponds to the expected *compensation*-related aspects of the framing of employment relations. This dimension therefore reflects the longstanding demand for the cushioning of increasing market risks with an extension of the welfare state and the selective protectionism of non-competitive economic sectors. As suggested in the theoretical section of this paper, this result also means that the framing approaches of the mainstream left and protectionist right challengers might not really be distinguishable from each other, since the compensation related arguments aiming at the protection of domestic markets coincide with the social aspects of compensation.

The following analyses build on the results from this factor analysis. More precisely, the factor scores or the actors' and countries' emphasis of the two dimensions will be used to explore the framing strategies in more detail.

FRAME EMPHASIS BY ACTORS AND COUNTRIES

Besides the study of how the different frame categories align in terms of the justification of support and opposition to labor market deregulation, it is also crucial to explore frame emphasis. This second aspect of framing strategies involves the manipulation of the salience of specific frames in order to shape the meaning of employment relations policies. Table 6 shows an OLS regression on the actors' and countries' frame emphasis of the compensation dimension. For both the countries and actors, the category with the highest use of growth related frames was chosen as a reference. These are the public enterprises and the U.K. Signifi-

cant deviances from the reference category—in combination with positive coefficients—show whether the actors or countries are moderately or heavily using more compensation-related arguments. Since the dependent variable has a range from 0 to 1, if multiplied by 100 the coefficients can be conveniently interpreted as percentages of explained variance of the usage of compensation. Furthermore, since we have identified two dimensions and are seeking to explain the share of the compensation dimension, the results, if reversed, can be taken as evidence for the usage of growth arguments.

[table 6 about here]

All left-oriented actors in the sample clearly insist on compensation. The Communists and radical Socialists, private and public sector unions, public interest groups and social democratic parties all use significantly more compensation frames than public enterprises. Furthermore, confirming the hypotheses, we see that there are left-oriented actors which only moderately deviate from right-oriented actors, somewhat neglecting compensation related arguments. These are the Social democrats with a 25.5 percentage point higher propensity for compensation, and the public interest groups with 39.4 percentage point higher usage of justification related to compensation. Both categories of unions and the left fringe parties (Communists/Radical Socialists) all have highly significant and substantive (46.3 percentage points or higher) preferences of compensation compared to public enterprises. Yet, not only traditionally left-wing actors, but also one actor usually affiliated with the political right were found to significantly emphasize compensation. The small business associations have a 35 percentage point higher likelihood of using compensation related justifications. This corroborates the expectations that also right-wing challengers rely on compensation for their public communication. However, contrary to expectations, the radical populist right does not show a similar framing strategy. We will see below that this could be due to country-specific characteristics, since the radical populist right parties are able to enter the debate only in Austria and

Switzerland.

As for the remaining actors on the political right, they do not significantly deviate from public enterprises in terms of their frame emphasis. This means that a broad range of important actors, from center right parties to business actors and public administrations, prefer to justify their positions on labor market issues in terms of economic growth. Since this applies to 9 of the 14 actor categories, we therefore can observe a pro-market dominance in the public debate on employment relations.

With regard to the countries categorization, we observe that framing corresponds with coordination patterns, with Germany as the only exception. Switzerland is not significantly different from the U.K. here, the most pro-growth leaning country. This means that the Swiss debate is also little shaped by a focus on compensation. In the Netherlands, there is a little more emphasis of justifications related to social and national protection, as the slightly significant but rather low coefficient shows. Compared to the U.K., the Dutch actors use compensation frames 16.6 percentage points more often. Austria and especially France, as expected, show a substantially higher compensation-related framing. The more coordinated structure of the employment relation regime in the case of Austria, as well as the stronger position of the state in the case of France, therefore correspond to a higher propensity to refer to compensation. But, as also suggested by our assumption, the framing pattern in these countries also seems to depend on the degree of pressure for reform. Austria and France are the two countries with the lowest implementation rate of liberalization reforms, which might have caused the debate to have shifted towards more growth-related arguments. As a result of their competitive disadvantage, the Austrian and French usage of growth thus is stronger than in the German debate, where the successfully implemented large-scale employment reforms may have dampened the enthusiasm for pro-market arguments.

As clear-cut as the results of table 6 may seem, it is still not evident whether the framing

patterns are consistent across countries or whether we find different relationships between country contexts and the framing of different actors. Figure 2 provides the fitted values of the actors' emphasis of compensation related arguments to show the country-specific framing patterns for each actor. More precisely, the bars show the actors' degree of emphasis of compensation frames in decreasing order, i.e. the actor with the strongest emphasis of compensation is placed on top. Furthermore, the order of the countries within each actor category corresponds to the overall country effects of the regression shown in table 5. The indicator runs from 0 meaning no emphasis of compensation to 1 meaning an exclusive usage of compensation-related frames.

[figure 2 about here]

A first striking result is that the country patterns are completely consistent even at the country-specific actor level, for example the German actors of every category use compensation arguments more than their counterparts in France. This is a clear finding in favor of the divergence model and, according to our theoretical argumentation, points to the fact that the coordination patterns and reform pressures in the systems of employment relations are connected to the framing. However, we also find a strong relationship with regard to the actor characteristics independent from country differences. In every country four actors justify their position on labor market policies more frequently with compensation arguments than with growth-related frames (Communists/Radical socialist parties, private and public sector unions as well as small business associations). While this finding exactly meets the expectations for the three left-oriented actors, the result for the small business associations is even more interesting in light of our assumption that compensation relates to welfare as well as the national control of employment relations. This right challenger was expected to pursue a balanced framing strategy, but especially the German small business associations heavily frame their position on labor market deregulation in terms of compensation. Yet the other two groups of

small business associations for which we have data, the Austrian and Swiss ones, show a relatively balanced framing with an emphasis of compensation close to 0.5. As for the left-wing challengers, only the British unions pursue a distinctively balanced framing strategy. This might be attributed to the overall weak position of labor interests in the U.K. ever since the confrontation with the Thatcher government in the 1980s, as well as the strong prevalence of growth frames in the U.K., which presumably forces unions to adapt to the overall political climate.

As expected, the two mainstream left actors in the sample, the Social democratic parties and public interest groups, employ generally balanced framing.¹⁰ As for the Social democrats, the country effects and not individual characteristics such as governmental responsibility seem to be the distinguishing factor. While the governing Labour party in the UK shows very weak usage of compensation frames, the German SPD puts a lot of emphasis on compensation although it was also in government during the whole research time frame (from September 2005 on in the grand coalition with the Union under Chancellor Merkel). We see a similar pattern for two actors usually attributed to the mainstream right. The Christian democrats and Conservatives, as well as experts in Germany and France show a balanced framing. Their counterparts in the other four countries use growth arguments more frequently, especially so in the U.K. Nevertheless, in all countries, these two actors use less compensation frames than the public interest groups and Social democrats. Once again, this seems to correspond rather to the overall patterns than to specific actor characteristics. With respect to the Christian democrats and Conservatives we have, for example, parties in government with an emphasis on compensation (in France) as well as ones with an emphasis of growth (in the Netherlands).

The remaining seven actors, with the exception of the radical populist right parties, can

¹⁰ The Greens had less than 5 statements in every country and were therefore excluded from the analyses. This might come as a surprise with respect to countries like Austria or Germany, where the green parties regularly have a strong standing in politics in general. However, it seems to confirm that the environment and cultural liberalism but not economic policies are the core issues of this actor (see Kriesi et al. 2012).

all be classified as mainstream right-oriented actors and, as expected, show a framing leaning toward an emphasis on growth. Especially multinational corporations, public enterprises, and EU/IGO actors heavily rely on growth arguments to justify their positions on labor market deregulation. Altogether, the at least partly strong emphasis of growth-related frames by half of the actors in the debate leads to a prevalence of this liberal-interventionist dimension in the public debate on employment relations. The radical populist right also ignores compensation arguments to a large extent, which seems surprising in the light of the high share of blue-collar workers and the petty bourgeoisie in its constituency. Moreover, this stands in contrast to expectations but might actually correspond to the ‘winning formula’ as found by Kitschelt (1999) for the right-wing populists in Austria and Switzerland, i.e. the notion that the populist right mobilizes the loser on cultural issues and pursues a winners’ program on economic issues (see Kriesi et al. 2008). Furthermore, in contrast to all other European right-wing populists, both the Swiss and Austrian ones had governmental responsibility on the national level during the time frame of the analyses. This might constitute an additional factor drawing them into a more growth emphasizing framing strategy.

In sum, figure 2 therefore reveals the combined relationship of country and actor characteristics regarding the framing of employment relations. There is a quite consistent left-right pattern in terms of an emphasis on compensation, whereas the mainstream left clearly deviates from the other left-oriented actors in its balanced framing. Furthermore, one challenger from the right, the small business associations, is also among the actors emphasizing compensation more often than growth-related arguments. As for the remaining right actors, they seem to use a reasonably strict pro-market strategy.

CONCLUSION

The main aim of this contribution was to explore the frame usage of the different actors engaging in the politics of employment relations in six west-European countries. Thus,

we started from the assumption that the study of framing can reveal a great deal about the dynamics of political struggles on employment relations. First of all, our analysis of frame polarities resulted in two framing strategies, the first being a combination of the social-democratic frames (“social protection” and “fairness”) with the neo-mercantilist category related to “protection”. The second general frame dimension was composed of the liberal “prosperity” and “economic freedom” frames with the neoliberal “intervention”. This broad picture of two competing framing patterns corresponds to the distinction between a political mainstream focus on economic growth and an alternative dimension emphasizing compensation.

Moreover, given the different ideological traditions characterizing the European countries and according to the analytical framework of the comparative political economy literature, it is likely that the national pathways diverge with respect to the overall framing of deregulating labor market reforms. In fact, we could confirm the often-raised claim that values and norms have a different substantial meaning among countries (e.g. Medrano 2003). We could show that the countries in our sample correspond to the typology developed on the basis of the VoC literature and the discrepancies can be explained by means of an interacting variable conceptualized as the overall pressure for reform in labor markets. As it becomes evident from the major labor market reforms currently occurring throughout Europe, such as the Hartz IV reform in Germany or the Universal Credit reform in the U.K., this policy domain is undergoing significant changes as a consequence of the transformation of the socio-economic context induced by globalization and post-industrialization. Accordingly, we found that the contemporary pressure for a reform in a country crucially affects the framing in the debate on employment relations.

More precisely, the results indicate that in Germany, France, Austria, and to a lesser extent in the Netherlands, compensation frames prevail, whereas in the traditionally more

liberal economies of the U.K. and Switzerland growth frames are emphasized more heavily. The most interesting result is the comparatively less intense use of compensation frames in France and Austria than in Germany. In the historically state-led economy of France and the traditionally social democracy-dominated Austrian corporatism, the pent-up deregulation reforms seem to have led to an insistence on growth-related arguments, whereas in the successfully reformed German system of labor relations, compensation frames to cushion the consequences are prominent. Finally, the debate in the small export-oriented economies of Switzerland and the Netherlands, as expected, is somewhat more pro-market oriented than the other continental countries. As our analyses show, these results are consistent across all actors relevant for the public debate on employment relations.

The empirical results additionally show that frame usage differs considerably between political actors as well. The actors' framing seems to depend on their traditional ideological orientation and on their adaptation to the structural changes, i.e. whether they represent the winners or losers of globalization and post-industrialization. Left-wing challengers such as Communists and Radical socialists and trade unions emphasize foremost compensation frames, which should draw support from the losers of recent politico-economic developments. In contrast, the left-wing mainstream actors invoke frames related to welfare or national protection only moderately more frequently than the political right. This leads to a similar framing pattern as right-wing actors, such as small business associations, which seek to accommodate to the losers of recent structural transformations. However, it remains an open question as to whether the left-wing mainstream actors and right-wing challengers show a similar framing of employment relations for different reasons, i.e. whether the former seek compensation for social security reasons and the latter intend to protect domestic markets. Finally, right mainstream actors such as public enterprises or the public administration, use first and foremost growth frames, accommodating the globalization winners. Altogether, the analyses

thus lead to the conclusion that the prevalent economic orthodoxy in Western Europe is reflected by an overall dominance of justification related to prosperity, economic promotion, and economic freedom. How this dominance plays out in the debates of the single countries, however, seems to be a matter of distinct national differences.

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(ONLINE) APPENDIX

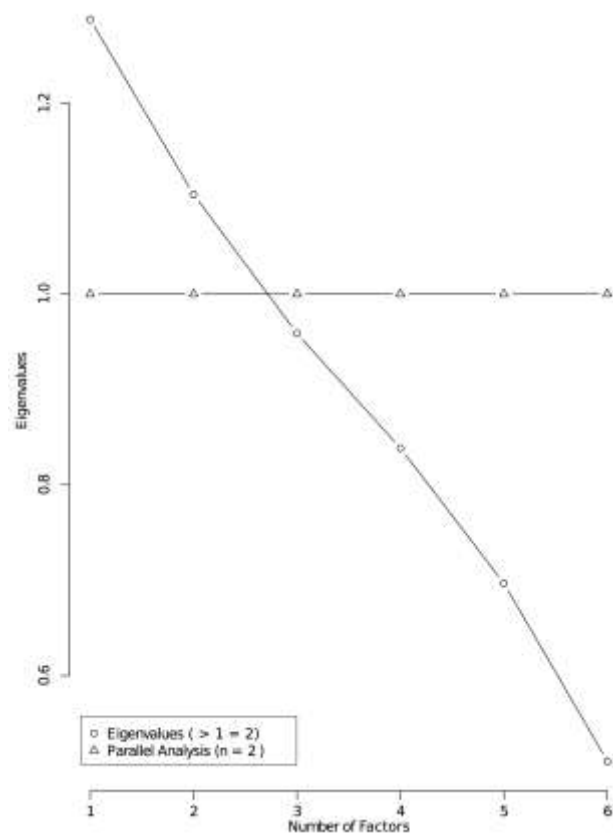
Table A.1: Allocation of Justifications to the Frame Categories

<i>Prosperity</i>
Innovation; economic prosperity in general (of individuals, companies or sectors); wealth in general; free trade; globalization; investments; profits; corporate management; competitiveness; research and development; economic progress.
<i>Economic freedom</i>
Economic self-interest; entrepreneurial success; blessing of capitalism and free markets; freedom of economic activity in general; neo-liberal ideology; individual responsibility; entrepreneurial freedom; freedom of choice.
<i>Intervention</i>
Market failure; fiscal policy; bureaucracy; political efficiency; public goods (education, infrastructure etc.); economic promotion in general; delinquency (corruption, clandestine employment, black market etc.); security in general; political stability; inflation policy.
<i>Protection</i>
Protectionism in general; relocation abroad and foreign take-overs; loss of traditions; answer to globalization; benefit for domestic or local business; national identity; national autonomy; national sovereignty; national interest in general; immigration.
<i>Social protection</i>
Employment protection; labor disputes and strikes; reducing unemployment; job quality; occupational health; social dumping; stakeholder interests; social security in general; consumer protection; individual well-being in general; labor relations and union agreements.
<i>Fairness</i>
Human dignity; democratic and participatory principles; equality of opportunity; poverty relief (as a moral duty); cultural diversity; gender equality; minority rights; exploitation; peace; solidarity with developing countries; public welfare; noncommercial values; humanitarian law; social justice in general; socialist ideology.

Table A.2: Actor Classification as Used in the Analyses

<i>Basic categories</i>	<i>Refinements</i>
Public authorities	IGO and EU actors Public administrations
Interest groups	Public sector unions Private sector unions Peak employer associations and white collar organizations Small business associations and farmer organizations
Party Families	Communists/Radical socialist parties Greens Social democratic parties Liberals Christian democrats/Conservative parties Radical populist right parties
External actors	Multinational corporations Public enterprises Experts Public interest groups

Figure A.1: Scree Test for the Number of Factors on Frame Polarities



TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1: Conceptualization of Framing Categories

<i>Ideology</i>	<i>Frame label</i>	<i>Description</i>
Liberal	Prosperity	Emphasis of innovation, economic performance and growth
	Economic freedom	Insisting on individual and entrepreneurial freedom
Neomercantilist	Intervention	Need for the regulation of markets and economic promotion
	Protection	Fostering traditional production and national wealth
Social Democratic	Social Security	Demanding redistribution and employment protection
	Fairness	Respect of social rights and egalitarian values

Figure 1: Mechanisms leading to the framing of employment relations

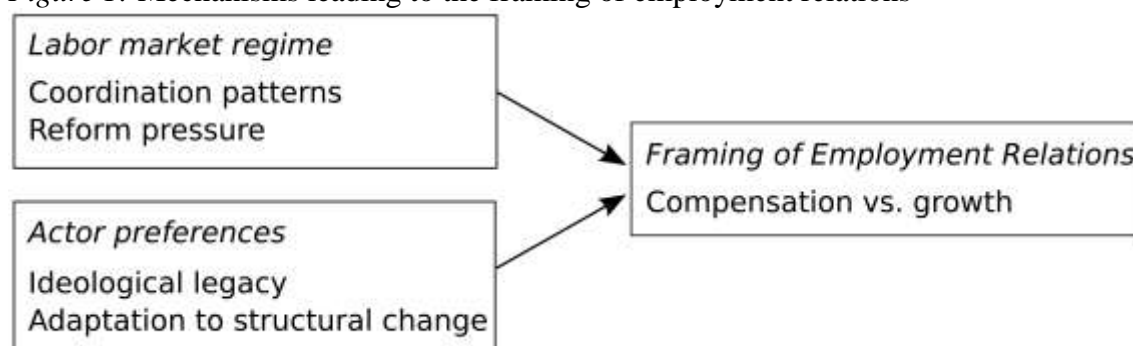


Table 2: Coordination patterns and reform pressure by country

	EPL level	Coordination Index	Number of liberalizing EPL reforms
Austria	2.04	1.00	5
France	2.80	0.69	7
Germany	2.52	0.95	17
Netherlands	2.34	0.66	12
Switzerland	1.06	0.51	n.a.
UK	0.59	0.07	15

Notes: EPL=Employment protection legislation. *Sources:* 1st column: OECD 2012, Mean of Employment Protection Legislation 1990-2008; 2nd column: Hall-Gingrich Coordination Index 1990-1995; 3rd column: Fondazione Rodolfo De Benedetti 2012, Total number of liberalizing EPL reforms (discrete and incremental) from 1980 to 2004.

Table 3: CSA Coding example

“Mr. Blair has made economic reform the top priority of his presidency, hoping to make labor markets more flexible in order to tackle record unemployment and sluggish growth across the continent.”
(*The Times*, May 31 2005, *Battle for the heart of Europe*)

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Polarity</i>	<i>Issue</i>	<i>Frames</i>
Blair	+1	Labor market reform	Social protection/Prosperity

Table 4: Frame Emphasis and Frame Polarity

	<i>Emphasis in %</i>	<i>Polarity</i>
<i>Liberal</i>	46.0	0.28
Prosperity	36.0	0.35
Economic freedom	10.0	0.04
<i>Neomercantilist</i>	19.8	0.21
Intervention	11.7	0.15
Protection	8.1	0.30
<i>Social democratic</i>	34.2	-0.19
Fairness	6.9	-0.23
Social security	27.3	-0.18
Total % / polarity	100	0.11
N	2021	

Notes: Article and country weights applied. Framing=Share in percentages; Polarity=Average positions.

Table 5: Results of Factor Analysis on Frame Polarities

	Growth (Factor1)	Securing (Factor2)	Unique- ness
Prosperity	0.31	0.20	0.86
Economic freedom	0.54	0.19	0.68
Intervention	0.76	0.00	0.42
Protection	0.08	0.24	0.94
Fairness	0.02	0.56	0.69
Social security	0.24	0.68	0.48
Eigenvalue	1.93	1.17	
Explained variance	17%	15%	

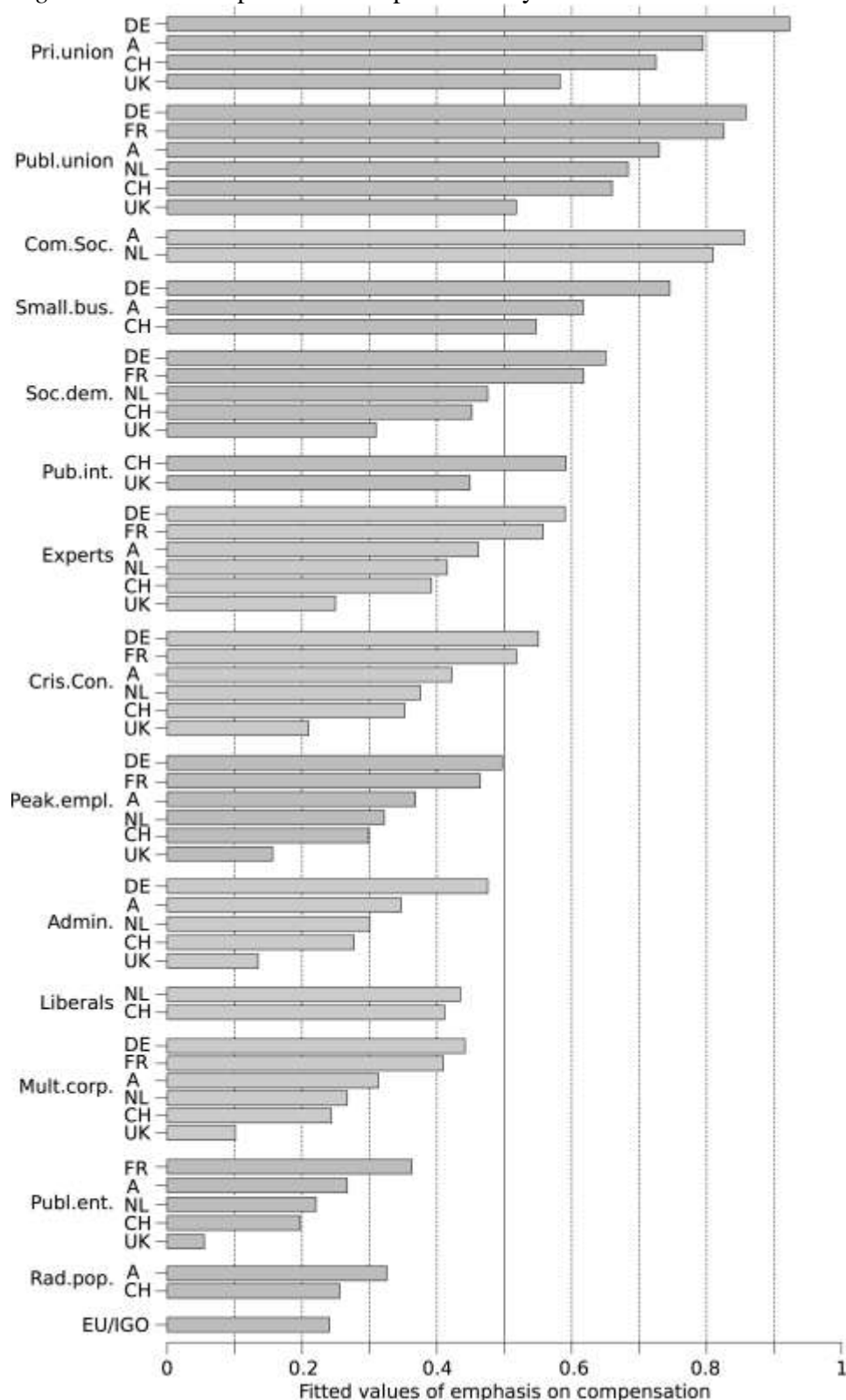
Notes: Article and country weights applied for all calculations. N=61.

Table 6: Results of OLS Regression on Emphasis of Compensation

	Estimates	Std. Err.	Pr(> t)
Intercept	0.055	0.105	n.s.
<i>Actors (ref=Public enterprises)</i>			
Public administrations	0.080	0.126	n.s.
Christian democratic/Conservative parties	0.155	0.119	n.s.
Communists/Radical socialist parties	0.589	0.168	**
IGO and EU actors	0.186	0.222	n.s.
Experts	0.195	0.119	n.s.
Liberals	0.214	0.168	n.s.
Multinational corporations	0.046	0.119	n.s.
Peak employer associations	0.101	0.119	n.s.
Private sector unions	0.528	0.134	***
Public interest groups	0.394	0.168	*
Public sector unions	0.463	0.119	***
Radical populist right parties	0.059	0.168	n.s.
Small business associations	0.350	0.147	*
Social democratic parties	0.255	0.125	*
<i>Countries (ref=UK)</i>			
Austria	0.212	0.090	*
Switzerland	0.142	0.085	n.s.
Germany	0.341	0.093	***
France	0.308	0.099	**
Netherlands	0.166	0.092	+
N	61		
R ²	0.62		
Adjusted R ²	0.44		
F-statistic	3.48*** on 19 and 41 DF		

Notes: Significance codes: *** ≤ 0.001 , ** ≤ 0.01 , * ≤ 0.05 , + ≤ 0.1 . DF=degrees of freedom. Actors with less than 5 statements excluded from the calculation.

Figure 2: Frame emphasis of compensation by actor



Notes: Actors with less than 5 statements excluded from the calculation. Fitted values=Results from regression shown in table 5; max.=1. Labels: Admin.=Public administrations, Chris.Con.=Christian democratic/Conservative parties, Com.Soc.=Communists/Radical socialist parties, EU/IGO=IGO and EU actors, Mult.corp.=Multinational corporations, Peak.empl.=Peak employer associations, Publ.ent.=Public enterprises, Publ.union=Public sector unions, Pri.union=Private sector unions, Rad.pop=Radical populist right parties, Small.bus.=Small business associations, Soc.dem.=Social democratic parties; A=Austria, CH=Switzerland, FR=France, DE=Germany, NL=Netherlands.